

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 13580 201706Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----120281 201710Z /41
O 191633Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

S E C R E T BONN 13580

NODIS (MSG UPGRADED PER S/S)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PARM, ST, GW
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE

REFS: (A) STATE 195279; (B) LAGOS 9337;
(C) BONN 13059; (D) STATE 197323

1. ON AUGUST 18, I CONVEYED INFORMATION IN REF A TO
FONOFF STATE SECRETARY VAN WELL. AT THE SAME TIME, I
MENTIONED THE REPORT IN REF B THAT LAGOS ANTI-APARTHEID
CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE
SAG'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT AND TO THE HELP IT IS
ALLEGEDLY RECEIVING FROM "CERTAIN STATES."

2. VAN WELL SAID SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES HAD TOLD
THE FLD THAT (A) THE SAG NUCLEAR PROGRAM WAS DEVOTED
SOLELY TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES; (B) NO NUCLEAR TEST WAS
IMMINENT ("BEVORSTEHEND"); AND (C) SOUTH AFRICA HAD
NO COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR MATTERS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.
VAN WELL SAID HE HAD PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO
SOVIET AMBASSADOR (FALIN) IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER SOVIET
DEMARCHE TO FRG EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER SAG
NUCLEAR PROGRAM (REF C). VAN WELL HAD TOLD FALIN THAT
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FRG WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION THROUGH
CONTACTS WITH FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS.

3. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG WAS CONSIDERING MAKING A MORE
FORMAL REPLY TO THE SOVIET DEMARCHE. HE ALSO MENTIONED
THAT THE FRG HAD RECEIVED AN "ORAL MESSAGE" FROM
BREZHNEV TO SCHMIDT ON THE SAME SUBJECT. VAN WELL SAID

THAT, IN ITS REPLY TO FALIN'S DEMARCHE, THE FRG MIGHT ADDRESS A COMMENT IN THE BREZHNEV MESSAGE THAT "WE KNOW SOUTH AFRICA COULD NOT DO IT (I.E., CARRY OUT NUCLEAR PROGRAM) ALONE." VAN WELL NOTED THAT TASS HAD BEEN MORE DIRECT IN IMPLYING THAT WESTERN STATES, INCLUDING THE FRG, WERE HELPING SOUTH AFRICA WITH ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM. VAN WELL'S ASSOCIATE (HAUBER) INQUIRED IF U.S. HAD ALSO RECEIVED BREZHNEV MESSAGE AND HOW WE PLANNED TO HANDLE IT; I SAID I WAS UN-INFORMED.

4. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG CURRENTLY HAS NO NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. HE SAID HE WOULD DOUBLE-CHECK THIS, BUT SEEMED QUITE SURE OF HIS ASSERTION.

5. VAN WELL NOTED THAT THE FRG BUYS URANIUM FROM SOUTH AFRICA, BUT TERMED THIS A PURELY COMMERCIAL MATTER. HE RECALLED THAT IN EARLY TO MID-1970'S, THE GERMAN PRIVATE FIRM "STEAG" HAD COOPERATED WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN URANIUM ENRICHMENT RESEARCH. THIS HAD STOPPED, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE SOUTH AFRICANS LOST INTEREST AFTER DEVELOPING THEIR OWN URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESS WHICH THEY CONSIDERED BETTER THAN THE GERMAN ONE.

6. IN RESPONSE TO MY EMPHASIS ON DESIRABILITY OF CLEARLY DISASSOCIATING SUPPLIER NATIONS FROM SOUTH
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AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM, VAN WELL SAID FRG NON-COOPERATION HAD BEEN CLEARLY SPELLED OUT AT LAST UNGA. CURRENTLY, FRG HAS BEEN EXPLAINING THIS POSITION DIRECTLY TO AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES IN BONN. MINISTER OF STATE VON DOHNANYI, WHO WILL BE FRG REPRESENTATIVE AT LAGOS CONFERENCE, WILL BE FULLY BRIEFED AND WILL BE PREPARED TO REBUT CLEARLY ANY ALLEGATIONS RE ALLEGED FRG ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

7. AFTER MEETING WITH VAN WELL, HAUBER MENTIONED THAT, ACCORDING TO FRG INTELLIGENCE, SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT BE IN A POSITION TO CARRY OUT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION FOR "AT LEAST ONE OR TWO YEARS."

8. I HAVE ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WITH VAN WELL AT 1630 TODAY TO DISCUSS WITH HIM QUESTIONS RAISED BY REF D. STOESEL
NOTE: NODIS CAPTION ADDED PER STATE 199009, AUG 20 77

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEMARCHE, NUCLEAR TEST SITES, NUCLEAR COOPERATION PROGRAMS, NUCLEAR TESTS, NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN13580
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: P840084-1865, D770330-0040, D770307-0844
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
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Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
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Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 77 STATE 195279, 77 LAGOS 9337, 77 BONN 13059, 77 STATE 197323
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1553717
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> GWR 20040429; <DBA CHANGED> GWR 20040505
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE
TAGS: PARM, MNUC, SF, GE, ST, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6f270358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009